Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~of processing a signaling message received from a service application and intended for delivery to a network element having a point code~~, comprising:

receiving a message from an originating network element at an interface of a service application, wherein the service application interfaces with both a Signaling System 7 (SS7) network and an Internet Protocol (IP) network, and wherein the message includes a point code associated with the originating network element;

accessing a network selection table comprised within a MT3 API level of a protocol stack to determine how to process the message, wherein the protocol stack comprises both a message transport part layer 3 (MTP3) layer and a MTP3 user adaptation layer (M3UA) layer ~~retrieving, from a data store, an indication of the network type associated with the point code~~;

processing the ~~signaling~~ message ~~through one of a plurality of protocol stack layers in accordance with the retrieved network type~~ with the MTP3 layer if it is determined that the point code associated with the originating network element corresponds to the SS7 network; and

processing the message with the M3UA layer if it is determined that the point code associated with the originating network element corresponds to the IP network.

2. (Currently Amended) The [[A]] method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~step of processing further comprises processing the signaling message in accordance with anyone of~~

~~message transport part layer 3 (MTP3) and MTP3 user adaptation layer (M3UA)~~ service application comprises a home location register (HLR) or a service control point (SCP).

3. (Currently Amended) The method [[of]] according to claim 1, wherein the network selection table comprises entries that associate point codes with network types ~~further comprising populating the data store with information relating to the network type associated with each point code~~.

4. (Currently Amended) The method [[of]] according to claim 3, wherein the ~~step of populating the data store is performed automatically~~ network selection table is populated automatically.

5. (Currently Amended) A device ~~Apparatus for processing a signaling message received from a service application and intended for delivery to a network element having a point code~~, comprising:

a communication interface configured to receive a message from an originating network element, wherein the device interfaces with both a Signaling System 7 (SS7) network and an Internet Protocol (IP) network, and wherein the message includes a point code associated with the originating network element;

~~retrieval means for from a data store an indication of the network type associated with the point code;~~

a processor ~~for processing the signaling message through one of a plurality of protocol stack layers in accordance with the retrieved network type.~~; and

a computer-readable storage medium including computer-readable instruction stored therein that, upon execution by the processor, cause the device to:

access a network selection table comprised within a MT3 API level of a protocol stack to determine how to process the message, wherein the protocol stack comprises both a message transport part layer 3 (MTP3) layer and a MTP3 user adaptation layer (M3UA) layer;

process the message with the MTP3 layer if it is determined that the point code associated with the originating network element corresponds to the SS7 network; and

process the message with the M3UA layer if it is determined that the point code associated with the originating network element corresponds to the IP network.

6. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Apparatus~~ according to claim 5, wherein the ~~processor is adapted to process the signaling message in accordance with anyone of message transport part layer 3 (MTP3) and MTP3 user adaptation layer (M3UA)~~ device comprises a home location register (HLR) or a service control point (SCP).

7. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Apparatus~~ according to claim 5, ~~further comprising automatic populating means for populating the data store with information relating to the network type associated with each point code~~ wherein the network selection table comprises entries that associate point codes with network types.

8. (New) The device according to claim 7, wherein the network selection table is populated automatically.

9. (New) The device according to claim 7, wherein the network selection table is populated manually.

10. (New) The device according to claim 5, wherein the network selection table comprised within the MT3 API level of the protocol stack is separate from a routing table in the MTPS layer.

11. (New) The device according to claim 5, wherein the device is not a signaling gateway.

12. (New) The device according to claim 5, wherein the originating network element is a service switching point (SSP) or a message switching center (MSC).

13. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein the network selection table comprised within the MT3 API level of the protocol stack is separate from a routing table in the MTPS layer.

14. (New) The method according to claim 3, wherein the network selection table is populated manually.

15. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein the service application is not a signaling gateway.

16. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein the originating network element is a service switching point (SSP) or a message switching center (MSC).